

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with Senator HATCH in sponsoring legislation requested by Mother Teresa to waive visa application fees for religious workers coming to the United States to perform charitable work for temporary periods.

During her visits to the United States, Mother Teresa asked President Clinton to take this step to waive visa fees for her missionaries coming to work in this country. Her Missionaries of Charity come to America to help the poor in our communities and to minister to the sick and the elderly. Each time they travel here, they are required to pay a \$120 visa fee to the United States Government.

It makes no sense to require these religious workers to pay a fee to the federal government in order to come here to help our communities. The legislation we introduce today would waive the fee in these instances.

This past weekend, while attending Mother Teresa's funeral in India, the First Lady met with Sister Nirmala, Mother Teresa's successor at the Missionaries of Charity Order in Calcutta. Sister Nirmala asked once again for a waiver of the visa fee and was delighted to learn that the United States Senate would be considering legislation this week to accomplish this goal as Mother Teresa had requested.

This is an important step that Congress can take to honor the memory of Mother Theresa and the compassionate work that her Order brings to America. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be agreed to, the bill be considered read a third time and passed, as amended, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and finally, any statements relating to the bill be placed at this point in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 1247) was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1198), as amended, was considered as read the third time and passed, as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Religious Workers Act of 1997".

SEC. 2. PERMANENT AUTHORITY FOR ENTRY INTO UNITED STATES OF CERTAIN RELIGIOUS WORKERS.

Section 101(a)(27)(C)(ii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(27)(C)(ii)) is amended by striking "before October 1, 1997," each of the two places it appears.

SEC. 3. WAIVER OF NONIMMIGRANT VISA FEES FOR CERTAIN CHARITABLE PURPOSES.

Section 281 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1351) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: "Subject to such criteria as the Secretary of State may prescribe, including the duration of stay of the alien and the financial burden upon the charitable organization, the Sec-

retary of State shall waive or reduce the fee for application and issuance of a non-immigrant visa for any alien coming to the United States primarily for, or in activities related to, a charitable purpose involving health or nursing care, the provision of food or housing, job training, or any other similar direct service or assistance to poor or otherwise needy individuals in the United States."

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting a withdrawal and sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2248. An act to authorize the President to award a gold medal on behalf of the Congress to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in recognition of his outstanding and enduring contributions toward religious understanding and peace, and for other purposes.

At 7:14 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Goetz, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 680) to amend the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 to authorize the transfer of surplus personal property to States for donation to nonprofit providers of necessities to impoverished families and individuals, and to authorize the transfer of surplus real property to States, political subdivisions and instrumentalities of States, and nonprofit organizations for providing housing or housing assistance for low-income individuals or families.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2443. An act to designate the Federal building located at 601 Fourth Street, N.W., in the District of Columbia, as the "Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington Field Office Memorial Building," in honor of William H. Christian, Jr., Martha Dixon Martinez, Michael J. Miller, Anthony Palmisano, and Edwin R. Woodruffe.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The message further announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 910. An act to authorize appropriations for carrying out the Earthquake Hazards Re-

duction Act of 1977 for fiscal years 1998 and 1999, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was signed subsequently by the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND) announced that on September 17, 1997, he had signed the following enrolled bills previously signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 63. An act to designate the reservoir created by Trinity Dam in the Central Valley project, California, as "Trinity Lake."

H.R. 2016. An act making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes.

MEASURE REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2443. An act to designate the Federal building located at 601 Fourth Street, N.W., in the District of Columbia, as the "Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington Field Office Memorial Building," in honor of William H. Christian, Jr., Martha Dixon Martinez, Michael J. Miller, Anthony Palmisano, and Edwin R. Woodruffe; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was discharged from the Committee on Finance and placed on the calendar pursuant to section 1023 of P.L. 93-344:

S. 1157. A bill disapproving the cancellations transmitted by the President on August 11, 1997, regarding Public Law 105-34.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-2973. A communication from the Administrator of Rural Development, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Rural Telephone Bank" (RIN0572-AB32) received on September 16, 1997; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2974. A communication from the Chief of the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of Forest Service accomplishments for fiscal year 1996; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2975. A communication from the Administrator of the Farm Service Agency, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled "Tree Assistance Program" (RIN0560-AF17) received on September 15, 1997; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2976. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Marketing and Regulatory Programs, Department of